

To:

From:

14th March, 1950

As promised, I attach a report on the ZELTWEG airfield which will doubtless dampen any lingering enthusiasm you may cherish on the subject.

The incidental remarks on HOERSCHING might interest you.

DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY  
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
SOURCE METHOD EXEMPTION J020  
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT  
DATE 2007

TO: F B I	
BUILDING K	13 APR 50
REMARKS: 1. Hoerschling would hardly be satisfactory because of range factors. 2. From Hoerschling via Klagensfurt via Adriatic to S of Torana & return = 10'15" 3. From Hoerschling via Klagensfurt via Adriatic to S of Torana & return = 11'15" 4. From Hoerschling direct to S of Torana & return = 8'20" 5. If a/c did not have to return to F.O. base, but could land in Greece, (over)	
FROM: A50	
BUILDING K	ROOM NO. 1302
EXTENSION 306	
FORM NO. 36-8 SEP 1946	

Horschung might be suitable  
6. Wish to point out that we do  
not have any policy approval for  
basing & operating clandestine a/c  
out of US mail Airbase.

[ ASO ]

TRANSMITTAL SLIP		
TO:		DATE <u>3/14</u>
BUILDING	ROOM NO.	
REMARKS  What about Horschung?  [Signature]		
FROM <u>PB-1</u>	[ ]	
BUILDING	FORM NO.	EXTENSION

FORM NO. 36-8  
SEP 1946

1. A representative from Head Office went to Austria at the end of February to obtain more detailed information about ZELTWEG. The general impression is that while it is not totally impossible to use the airfield for the purpose in mind, the airfield is not by any means satisfactory from either the navigational or security points of view. The various factors are set out below.

2. Surrounding Country

ZELTWEG is ringed by hills and is subject on occasions to a certain amount of industrial smoke. The hills are in the nature of 4,500 feet a.s.l. anywhere within 4 - 5 miles of the perimeter. There are also overhead power cables on three sides within  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile. There is also a main road running close and in addition a number of sizeable towns.

3. Airfield Facilities

There is one runway, (East to West) 1,400 - 1,500 yards long, which in reasonable conditions should be alright for a Dakota. The RAF staff there could, with about three hours notice, lay out a goose-neck flare path. There are also lights on the hangars. They are able to refuel but only stock a maximum of 750 gallons. There are no radio facilities nor navigational aids of any kind. The only sort of signal they could give from the ground would be by Aldis lamp. Owing to the small size of the C. and M. party, it is unlikely that they would be able to provide rations, at any rate at short notice, so the Americans would presumably provide their own. We are advised that night landings and take-offs would be hazardous.

4. Communications

There are no RAF communications to the airfield. Thus, when OPC wanted to arrange an operation, they would have to pass a warning message through channels which would have to be decided separately, to the head of the Air Division of the British Headquarters in Austria. The latter would then have to pass the message over the open civilian line to the squadron leader who commands at ZELTWEG. There is an obvious danger of leakage here.

5. Security

The squadron leader commanding at ZELTWEG will have to be told a certain amount about the operation, and also the C.O. of SCHWECHAT (of which ZELTWEG is a satellite). Apart from the navigational difficulties, it is thought inadvisable from the security point of view for an aircraft to take off or land at night as, owing to the small amount of air traffic in that area, night landings or take-offs would be bound to arouse the interest of the local population. Our representative was also informed that a fair proportion of the population round ZELTWEG is very pre-Communist.

6. Meteorology

There are no met facilities at ZELTWEG, but possibly the head of the Air Division in Austria could telephone through and give a forecast, but this would only be local and would not cover the complete route.

7. The Future of ZELTWEG

The position at present is that KLAGENFURT is closed down as an airfield though the hangars are used by the Army. There is, however, a proposal to reopen KLAGENFURT, to man it mainly with Austrians but with a small nucleus of RAF officers. If KLAGENFURT is reopened, it is almost certain that ZELTWEG will be completely closed down. In this event KLAGENFURT, with a mainly Austrian staff, would presumably be unacceptable from the security point of view.

8. We are not aware of OPC's plan of operations, i.e. whether they envisage a round trip beginning and ending at an airfield in Germany, or a single trip starting in Germany and finishing, say, in Athens.

9. But in either event, it is suggested that they use the American airfield at HOERSCHING in the American Zone of Austria, which is only 60 miles north of ZELTWEG and is in full commission. We calculate that a C.47 starting from FRANKFURT and refuelling at HOERSCHING could do either the round trip or the single trip with a reasonable margin of safety.

10. From the security point of view, a plane will be far less conspicuous landing at HOERSCHING, where there is much regular traffic, than at ZELTWEG, where the arrival of one plane is something of a novelty. The novelty would be the greater since the plane would be an American one and there is a perfectly good American air base only 60 miles away.

11. You will see therefore that the arguments against use of ZELTWEG airfield, which is not properly in commission, are formidable. With the presence of the American air base at HOERSCHING we would be hard put to it to produce a compelling argument to put to Air C-in-C BAFO.